

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9131
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION GENEVA

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: ILO, UK

SUBJECT: IN THE WAKE OF THE SPECIAL ILO ENVOY'S VISIT

REF: LONDON 1602 (NOTAL)

SUMMARV - TALKS WITH REORESENTATIVES OF THE FCO AND THE
DEOARTMENT OF EMOLOYMENT IN THE WAKE OF AMBASSADOR
SILBERMAN'S VISIT (REFTEL) INDICATE THAT WHILE THE BRI-
TISH ARE SERIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE
U.S. MIGHT CAPRY OUT ITS INTENT TO LEAVE THE ILO, THEY
HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT HOW FAR THEY CAN GO TO MEET SOME
OF THE SPECIFIC REQUESTS MADE BY THE AMBASSADOR. THESE
OFFICIALS INSIST. HOWEVER, THAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN REA-
CHED BY THE UI. THE UK WILL ALSO BE VIEWING WITH CONSI-
DERABLE INTEREST THE WORK OF THE U.S. INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
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CABINET COMMITTEE DEALING WITH THE ILO CRISIS. END SUM-

MARY.

1. GEORGE FOGGON, FCO OVERSEAS LABOR ADVISOR, SAID HE REGRETTED THAT WHEN AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN MET FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN, THE LATTER DID NOT DISCUSS AT ALL THE MAJOR POINTS OF A BRIEFING PAPER PREPARED FOR HIM BY THE FCO. ALTHOUGH THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD CONCURRED IN IT EARLIER, FOGGON ATTRIBUTES CALLAGHAN'S FAILURE TO DO SO TO THE HIGHLY CHARGED ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETING, IN PARTICULAR TO THE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S "SHARP REACTION" TO WHAT FOGGON TERMED THE "ROUGH STYLE" OF THE U.S. PRESENTATION. CALLAGHAN WAS PARTICULARLY IRRITATED BY WHAT HE TOOK TO BE AN IMPLICATION THAT BRITAIN HAD NOT BEEN A STEADY SUPPORTER OF THE U.S. WITHIN THE ILO. (FOGGON NOTED IN PASSING THAT THE SAME BRIEFING PAPER HAD BEEN GIVEN TO MICHAEL FOOT, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR USE IN DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN.)

2. FOGGON STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT IF MR. CALLAGHAN HAD FOLLOWED THE BRIEFING PAPER AS EXPECTED, HE WOULD HAVE EMPHASIZED STRONGLY THE "DEEP REGRET AND ANXIETY WHICH THE UK WOULD FEEL IF THE U.S. WERE TO CARRY OUT ITS INTENT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE ILO." THE PAPER ALSO EMPHASIZED HE SAID, THAT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE UK TO REFRAIN FROM TAKING ANY RIGID POSITION AT THIS STAGE. NOTING ALSO THAT A U.S. INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CABINET GROUP HAD BEEN FORMED TO DEAL WITH THE ILO CRISIS AND THAT THE UK WOULD OBSERVE ITS PROGRESS BEFORE DECIDING. THE PAPER FURTHERMORE SUGGESTED THAT THE UK STRONGLY SHARES THE U.S. CONCERN ABOUT ADVERSE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ILO, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF ITS "POLITICIZATION" AND IN FACT SUPPORTED THE ABOLITION OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE, WHERE SUCH "POLITICIZATION" WAS RAMPANT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WHILE THE PAPER ARGUES THAT THERE IS NO REAL THREAT TO THE TRI-PARTITE STRUCTURE THE UK WILL FIGHT STRONGLY TO PROTECT THE INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY OF THE DIFFERENT GROUPS WHICH FORM THE BASIS OF THAT STRUCTURE. THE UK, IT NOTED, SHARES WITH THE U.S. ITS VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF DUE PROCESS ALTHOUGH IT MAY DIFFER WITH THE U.S. OVER INTERPRETATION. THE PAPER ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THERE HAS

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NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY CLOSE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE UK AND EMPHASIZES THAT THIS IS ESSENTIAL IN THE FUTURE.

3. WE ASKED DOGGON ABOUT THE SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED BY THE AMBASSADOR, NAMELY THE FOUR CHAIRMANSHIPS WHICH ARE BEING CONTESTED THIS YEAR. THE ILO GOVERNING BODY, IN MAY; THE GENERAL CONFERENCE, IN JUNE; THE EMPLOYMENT CON-

ERENCE, JUNE9 AND THE MARITIME CONFERENCE, IN OCTOBER.
FOGGON AGAIN EMPHASIZED THAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE AS
YET ON THESE QUESTIONS, ALTHOUGH THE MATTER WILL BE DIS-
CUSSED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EC NINE. (FOGGON RE-

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FERRED TO A HOPE AMONG A NUMBER OF EC NINE OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE ILO THAT AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN MIGHT BE WILLING TO TALK TO THEM AS A GROUP, PERHAPS IN GENEVA DURING THE MARCH ILO GOVERNING BODY MEETING.) IN ANY EVENT, FOGGON ADDED, THE UK WILL WANT TO TOUCH BASE WITH MANY OTHER COUNTRIES. HE SAID. "YOU KNOW, IT IS NOT SIMPLY A QUESTION OF JOUSTING BETWEEN TWO KNIGHTS; IT IS MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT, PERHAPS LIKE A GAME OF CHESS."

4. FOGGON BELIEVES THAT IN THE LONG TERM IT WILL NOT BE

POSSIBLE TO KEEP THE SOVIETS OR OTHER EASTERN EUROPEANS OUT OF THE KEY POSITIONS. "IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO EX- CLUDE COMPLETELY EASTERN EUROPE NOW, BUT IT WOULD CREATE," . HE SAID, "A HELLUVA BAD FEELING WITHIN THE ILO. WE WILL HAVE TO THEN CONSIDER WHAT HAPPENS WERE WE TO OBTAIN A FREEZE ON THEIR HOLDING THESE POSITIONS -- SAY AFTER TWO
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YEARS. THE EASTERN EUROPEANS WILL FURTHER BUILD UP THEIR RIGHT TO CHAIRMANSHIPS, AND WE WILL AGAIN HAVE THE PROBLEM. WE MUST ALSO ASK OURSELVES, CAN EUROPE DELIVER 128 MEMBERS?"

5. BARBARA GREEN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND A VETERAN UK REPRESENTATIVE AT ILO MEETINGS, BROADLY ECHOED FOGGON'S VIEW. SHE SAID THE UK "WANTS TO HELP" IN MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE U.S. BOTH IN TERMS OF GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFIC TARGETS (THE AHAIRMANSHIPS) BUT SHE IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE U.S. CAN ACHIEVE A PERFECT SCORE. AS SHE PUT IT "OUR FEELING IS THAT IT IS A PITY WE CANNOT GO QUITE 100 PER CENT WITH U.S. ON ONE OR TWO POINTS, BUT WE ARE BEHIND YOU ABOUT 75 PER CENT OF THE WAY." LIKE FOGGON, MISS GREEN EMPHASIZED THAT THE UK HAD NOT MADE UP ITS MIND ON THE SPECIFIC PROBLEM OF THE CHAIRMANSHIPS. SHE, HOWEVER, TALKED ABOUT COMPROMISE SOLUTIONS EITHER IN TERMS OF ALLOWING AL EASTERN EUROPEAN TO CHAIR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE THIS JUNE IN EXCHANGE FOR EASTERN EUROPEANS STEP- PING BACK IN FAVOR OF ANOTHER CANDIDATE FOR THE GOVERNING BODY, OR IN AEREING TO AN EASTERN EUROPEAN CHAIRMAN THE NEXT TIME AROUND. (WITH REGARD TO THE OTHER CONFERENCES, SHE NOTED SIMPLY THAT THE PROSPECTIVE TUNISIAN CANDIDATE FOR CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE HAD NOT YET INDICATED HE HAD AFRICAN SUPPORT, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL, AND THAT THE MARITIME CONFERENCE CHAIRMANSHIP WOULD PROBABLY DEPEND ON THE PERSONALITY OF THE CANDIDATE.)

6. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS CLEARLY THE REAL MEANING BEHIND THE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S HOSTILE REACTION TO THE AMBASSADOR'S PRESENTATION. THE MAIN POINT, NONE- THELESS, WHICH IS NOW EMERGING IS THAT THE BRITISH APPEAR TO BE GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DANGER OF THE U.S. WITHDRAWAL AND WISH TO DO WHAT IS POSSIBLE TO MEET PRINCIPLE U.S. OBJECTIVES AND COOPERATE IN ATTAINING SPECIFIC TARGETS. THE EMPHASIS THEIR SPOKESMEN SEEM TO BE MAKING IS THAT THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GO THE WHOLE WAY WITH THE U.S. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY LOOKING FOR SOME COMPROMISE WHICH WILL RESPOND TO A MAJOR PART OF U.S. CONCERNs WHILE AVOIDING A COUNTER BLOW FROM THE EASTERN BLOC OR FROM THE
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DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. IT WOULD APPEAR. VIEWED FROM LONDON, THAT THE MAIN THRUST OF BRITISH EFFORTS WILL BE, AS IN THE PAST, TO STRIKE SOME SORT OF BALANCE BETWEEN THE CONTENDING FOPCES.

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